

As memories of World War II and the Berlin Blockade fade with the passing years, I believe it is even more important to commemorate the spirit of kindness that led our veterans to bring hope and joy to the weary and beleaguered citizens of Berlin. May we honor their legacy and follow their example.

I am grateful for this opportunity to commemorate this noble endeavor and to honor the memory of those who are surely with us in spirit, those who gave the last full measure of devotion to a cause greater than themselves, a cause that changed the course of history for the better.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously support H. Res. 398, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 398.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF ASSISTANCE DOGS IN HELPING WOUNDED VETERANS

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 291) recognizing the crucial role of assistance dogs in helping wounded veterans live more independent lives, expressing gratitude to The Tower of Hope, and supporting the goals and ideals of creating a Tower of Hope Day.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 291

Whereas the brave men and women defending America's democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan are in harms way;

Whereas thousands of America's returning veterans were seriously wounded in combat, including brain injuries, single and double amputations, and other traumatic wounds;

Whereas these brave soldiers return to the United States and spend weeks, months, and years in hospitals recovering, and return to their homes needing assistance to regain their independence;

Whereas these recovering soldiers who are teamed up with assistance dogs lead more comfortable and more independent lives;

Whereas these dogs provide assistance to wounded veterans while walking, going up and down stairs, and getting up from a sitting or fallen position, and also pick up dropped articles, retrieve items from a distance, pull manual wheelchairs a short distance, turn lights on and off, and perform other important daily tasks;

Whereas assistance animals offer priceless companionship and unconditional love on a daily basis;

Whereas there are fewer than 75 veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan who currently have assistance dogs because they either cannot afford them or do not know about the benefits that assistance dogs provide;

Whereas severely wounded veterans currently have to wait up to two years before they can receive an assistance animal;

Whereas The Tower of Hope was created following the attacks of September 11, 2001, to bring hope to wounded veterans by providing them with assistance dogs at no cost; and

Whereas The Tower of Hope has substantially improved many lives by raising funds for the training of assistance dogs, providing grants for American combat wounded veterans, and advocating for the benefits of these animals: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) acknowledges the importance of assistance dogs in helping combat-wounded veterans live happier and more independent lives;

(2) applauds the outstanding work of The Tower of Hope and its dedication to training and providing assistance dogs to wounded veterans, as well as educating people about the benefits of such animals;

(3) expresses deep gratitude and support to volunteers and donors who have made this great program possible by generously offering time and funds;

(4) encourages the general public to support wounded veterans by volunteering or donating to help train assistance dogs;

(5) calls for a vigorous promotion of, and advocacy for, the benefits of assistance animals for physicians and the general public; and

(6) supports the goals and ideals of creating a Tower of Hope Day in honor of wounded American veterans and their service dogs, the work of The Tower of Hope, and the many generous donors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 291, a resolution to recognize The Tower of Hope and the importance of assistance dogs. I truly believe the lives of our wounded veterans are enhanced by the role of assistance dogs that help them live more independently. The Tower of Hope has dedicated their time and effort to raise funds to train service dogs, advocate for the benefit of such valuable animals, and award grants to our wounded veterans.

□ 1530

The Tower of Hope is an organization that was founded by Ms. Cathy Carilli, whose husband, Tom Sinton, died in the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. As a tribute to the memory of her husband, The Tower of Hope was established and plays a major role in helping those seriously wounded in the war that almost immediately followed the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Many servicemembers are coming home with serious injuries and currently have to wait up to 2 years before they can receive an assistance animal. Many cannot afford them or do not know about the benefits that assistance dogs provide. House Resolution 291 would help overcome these barriers by bringing more recognition to this organization that provides assistance dogs at no cost, educates the public about the benefits of such animals, and brings hope to our wounded heroes. It can cost up to \$20,000 to train a service dog, and I recognize The Tower of Hope for providing these valuable animals at no cost to our wounded warriors. Their work is truly admirable.

These costs are not covered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, but by national and local organizations and generous donors. I am confident that this resolution will help promote the benefits of assistance dogs and express support to all organizations, volunteers, and donors that make such programs possible.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the support of House Resolution 291.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 291, a resolution recognizing the role of assistance dogs in helping wounded veterans live more independent lives, expressing gratitude to The Tower of Hope, and supporting the goals and ideals of creating a Tower of Hope Day.

Founded in 2006, The Tower of Hope is one of many organizations across the Nation providing and training assistance dogs to help individuals with disabilities. Assistance dogs not only provide a specific service to their handlers, but also greatly enhance their lives with a new sense of freedom and independence.

Training an assistance dog is fairly expensive. An individual dog trained for placement can cost upwards of around \$25,000 in care and training costs, and training takes around 18 months to complete.

With so many veterans in need of this type of help, it is important for us to focus on this need and provide encouragement to organizations such as The Tower of Hope working toward helping these veterans. Individual citizens can check to see if there is an organization in their State providing training to assistance dogs and whether these dogs are being provided to servicemembers by checking the Assistance Dogs International North America Web site.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, for introducing this legislation and bringing to our attention the importance of these service dogs to our wounded warriors. I would also like to thank Chairman FILNER and Ranking Member BUYER for moving the bill so quickly to the floor for consideration.

I urge all my colleagues to support H. Res. 291.

I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 291.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. I would also like to thank my colleagues who were involved in pushing this bill forward, with a special thank you to our colleague from Florida, Mr. HASTINGS, for his unwavering support of our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously support this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 291.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

NATIONAL VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT WEEK

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 866) expressing support for designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our nation in times of war and conflict.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 866

Whereas the Veterans History Project was established by a unanimous vote of the United States Congress to collect and preserve the wartime stories of American veterans;

Whereas Congress charged the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress to undertake the Veterans History Project and to engage the public in the creation of a collection of oral histories that would be a lasting tribute to individual veterans and an abundant resource for scholars;

Whereas there are 17,000,000 wartime veterans in America whose stories can educate people of all ages about important moments and events in the history of the United States and the world and provide instructive narratives that illuminate the meanings of "service", "sacrifice", "citizenship", and "democracy";

Whereas the Veterans History Project relies on a corps of volunteer interviewers, partner organizations, and an array of civic

minded institutions nationwide who interview veterans according to the guidelines it provides;

Whereas increasing public participation in the Veterans History Project will increase the number of oral histories that can be collected and preserved and increase the number of veterans it so honors; and

Whereas "National Veterans Awareness Week" commendably preceded this resolution in the years 2005 and 2006: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes "National Veterans Awareness Week";

(2) supports the designation of a "National Veterans History Project Week";

(3) calls on the people of the United States to interview at least one veteran in their families or communities according to guidelines provided by the Veterans History Project; and

(4) encourages local, State, and national organizations along with Federal, State, city and county governmental institutions to participate in support of the effort to document, preserve, and honor the service of American wartime veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Abraham Lincoln, in the Gettysburg Address, stated that the "world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." In that spirit, Congress created the Veterans History Project in 2000. The goal of the project is to capture the personal stories of our Nation's heroes so that our children and their children can more fully understand the history of this great Nation.

The project directed the Library of Congress to establish a national archive for the collection and preservation of videotaped oral histories of our veterans, as well as the copying of letters written during their time in service and diaries they kept so there is a national repository of this very important part of our Nation's history. This is a worthwhile investment of time and resources and is a gift that can be given for generations and centuries to come.

There are more than 23 million veterans living in this country today, including the 3 million veterans of World War II. It is important that these stories are told, and it is more important that these stories are told from the mouths of those who were on the front lines and participated firsthand as history was made.

This resolution before us today, House Resolution 866, calls on the people of the United States to interview at least one veteran in their family or community according to guidelines provided by the Veterans History Project.

I would like to thank all the volunteers from across this country, not

only the veterans who have shared their stories, but their family members and friends that have helped to capture their accounts.

Volunteers and participants become historians themselves; they can collect video and audio recordings, create a collection of recordings to be available for public use, or collect written materials relevant to personal histories of all war veterans.

I encourage all Americans to reach out and thank the veterans they know, and their families, for their amazing sacrifice, learn more about their great contributions to our country, gain the wisdom of their personal stories of our Nation's history, and participate in the Veterans History Project.

As the chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee has said, he has had the opportunity to hear many accounts from many veterans. He hears the sense of pride that comes with them, as do each of us who defended our country.

This Veterans Day, and the whole year through, join me and take the time to show your gratitude to those who have answered the call to duty.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the chairman, Chairman FILNER, Ranking Member BUYER, and all members of the committee, and a special thank you to Representative RON KIND who introduced this to me.

As a schoolteacher and someone who understands the value of these oral histories, this is an incredible archive. The support of this project cannot be overstated. It is going to be something that will allow generations to come to understand what this country was built upon, and they will have it as a resource to access at any time.

So, again, I thank everyone involved in this project.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H. Res. 866, a resolution expressing support for the designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our Nation at times of war and conflict.

The National Veterans History Project was created by P.L. 106-380, which was signed into law by President Clinton on October 27, 2000. It is housed in the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress and contains firsthand accounts of veterans from every armed service conflict since World War I. The online database contains records of over 70,000 veterans and will continue to be a wonderful resource to inform and inspire all Americans for generations to come.

In reviewing this collection of information on veterans, you can find the stories in the collection of our only remaining American veteran of World War I, Frank Buckles. His digital collection contains both video and audio